BRITISH COLUMBIA | BCStats

Infoline

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- **Retail sales inch ahead 0.2% in August**
- **Visitor entries dip 0.3% in August**
- **BC's homicide rate drops to a level not seen since 1964**

The Economy

- **Total retail sales in British Columbia edged 0.2% higher (*seasonally adjusted*) in August after slipping (-0.6%) in the previous month.** Seven of the eleven major retail subsectors recorded lower revenues, chiefly health & personal care (-3.0%), sporting goods, hobby, book & music (-2.3%) and building material & garden supply (-1.8%) stores. However, these declines were offset by a substantial gain in revenues at gasoline stations (+6.1%), along with more moderate increases in sales by motor vehicle & parts dealers (+1.5%) and food & beverage stores (+1.2%).

  Nationally, retail sales rose 0.5% in August, due to higher sales at gasoline stations (+1.9%) and motor vehicle & parts dealers (+1.0%). Eight provinces registered increases, led by gains in Alberta (+1.4%), Newfoundland & Labrador (+1.0%) and Ontario (+0.9%). Nova Scotia (-2.3%) and PEI (-1.1%) were the only provinces to post weaker retail sales in August. *Data Source: Statistics Canada*

- **Visitor entries to Canada via British Columbia slipped 0.3% (*seasonally adjusted*) in August.** The number of American entries inched higher (+0.5%), almost entirely due to an increase in same-day travel (+1.4%). However, this was overshadowed by a slump (-2.6%) in non-US entries, particularly from Asia (-3.3%) and Europe (-2.9%). The number of Canadians returning home from abroad via BC rose 1.4%.

  Nationally, non-resident entries fell 1.0% in August, a slowdown that was largely driven by fewer entries from the US. While Newfoundland & Labrador (+7.0%) and Saskatchewan (+6.6%) posted significant increases, this was offset by declines in entries via Quebec (-3.9%), Ontario (-1.1%) and BC (-0.3%). *Data Source: Statistics Canada*

Crime

- **The number of police-reported homicides in British Columbia fell sharply (-29.7%), from 118 homicides in 2009 to 83 in 2010.** As a result, the homicide rate[1] for BC fell to 1.83, a level not seen since 1964. While Abbotsford-Mission continues to have the highest homicide rate (2.28) among British Columbia's major urban centres, the rate is considerably lower than in 2009, when it was 5.20. Likewise, the homicide rate in Vancouver (1.50) was also significantly lower in 2010 than the rate reported a year earlier (2.61). Victoria's homicide rate, while comparatively low (1.39), was significantly higher than in 2009 (0.85). In Kelowna, the homicide rate was unchanged at 1.68.

  At the national level, police-reported homicide dropped from 1.81 in 2009 to 1.62 in 2010, marking the lowest national homicide rate recorded since 1967. At the provincial level, homicide rates were lowest in PEI (0.00), Newfoundland & Labrador (0.78) and Quebec (1.06). Manitoba (3.64) and Saskatchewan (3.25) had the highest provincial homicide rates. In the territories, where small

[1] All rates are calculated per 100,000 population. Homicide rates are calculated based on the number of homicides reported in a given year, regardless of when the crime may have occurred.

Report **No report this issue**

Did you know...

In 2010, an estimated 671,774 British Columbians, or 17% of the population over 12 years of age, indicated that they were either daily or occasional smokers.

Data Source: Statistics Canada

populations cause homicide rates to fluctuate sharply from one year to the next, Nunavut had the highest homicide rate (18.06), followed by Yukon (2.90) and Northwest Territories (2.29). *Data Source: SC Cat. no. 85-002-X*

Gambling

- **In 2009, nearly two-thirds (63%) of households in British Columbia reported expenditures on gambling activities.** These households spent an average of $450 during the year, slightly less than the national average ($495).

  Government-operated lotteries were by far the most common gambling activity (54%) among British Columbians, followed by non-government lotteries and/or raffles (23%), casinos, slot machines/VLTs (17%) and bingos (3%). Saskatchewan (76%) had the highest proportion of households that reported gambling expenditures in 2009, while households in Alberta reported the highest average expenditure ($785).

  Data Source: SC Cat. no. 75-001-X

- **Overall, gambling revenues in British Columbia accounted for roughly 6% of total government revenue in 2008.** BC had the largest proportion of government revenues coming from gambling, followed by Alberta (5%), Saskatchewan (5%) and Manitoba (5%). Nationally, 4% of government revenues came from gambling activities.

  Data Source: SC Cat. no. 75-001-X

Labour

- **During the mid-1990s, a 50-year-old worker in Canada could expect to remain employed for an average of 12.5 years.** By 2008, the average number of working years remaining to 50-year-old workers had increased to 16.0, illustrating the increasingly common decision to delay retirement. This is also reflected in the employment rate for individuals aged 55 years and older, which rose sharply from 22% in 1996 to 34% in 2010.

  Data Source: SC Cat. no. 75-001-X

- **Based on an average of the first six months of 2011, the proportion of workers in British Columbia covered by a collective agreement edged up (+0.1 percentage points) to 31.9%.**[2] At the national level, an estimated 31.7% of employees were covered by a collective agreement with the highest rates in Newfoundland & Labrador (39.9%) and Quebec (39.6%). The lowest coverage rates were recorded in Alberta (23.9%) and Ontario (28.2%).

  Coverage rates were highest for those working in public administration (72.0%) and education (71.6%), while coverage was least likely in agriculture (4.7%) and professional, scientific & technical services (5.0%).

  Data Source: SC Cat. no. 75-001-X

Research and Development

- **Spending on research and development (R&D) by higher education institutions in British Columba was estimated at $973.9 million in 2009/2010, an increase of 4.0% over the previous year.**[3,4]

  Approximately 43% of funding for R&D undertaken by higher education institutions came from within the higher education sector. Federal funds accounted for another 32% of total R&D spending, with provincial governments (10%), non-profit organizations (9%) and private enterprise (5%) each contributing comparatively modest amounts. A relatively minor amount (2%) of total R&D funding came from sources outside of Canada. *Data Source: SC Cat. no. 88-001-X*

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[2] Note that collective agreement coverage does not necessarily imply labour union membership.
[3] "Higher education institutions" includes all universities and affiliated research hospitals, experimental stations and clinics.
[4] All expenditures are expressed in constant 2002 dollars.

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BC at a glance . . .

POPULATION (thousands)	Jul 1/2011	% change on one year ago
BC	4,573.3	1.0
Canada	34,482.8	1.0
GDP and INCOME (Released Nov 4)		
(BC - at market prices)	2009	% change on one year ago
Gross Domestic Product (GDP) *($ millions)*	191,006	-3.4
GDP *($ 2002 millions)*	161,851	-1.8
GDP *($ 2002 per Capita) (reflects revised pop)*	36,287	-3.5
Personal Disposable Income *($ 2002 per Capita)*	25,374	-1.9
TRADE ($ millions, seasonally adjusted)		% change on prev. month
Manufacturing Shipments - Aug 2011	3,170	1.4
Merchandise Exports - Aug 2011	2,663	-3.7
Retail Sales - Aug 2011	4,918	0.2
CONSUMER PRICE INDEX	% change on	12-month avg
(all items - Sep 2011)	one year ago	% change
BC	2.4	2.4
Vancouver	2.3	2.4
Victoria	2.3	2.2
Canada	3.2	2.8
LABOUR FORCE (thousands)		
(seasonally adjusted)	Sep 2011	% change on prev. month
Jobs Created (-Lost) - BC	31.6	
Labour Force - BC	2,466.0	0.6
Employed - BC	2,299.7	1.4
Unemployed - BC	166.3	-9.7
		Aug 2011
Unemployment Rate - BC *(percent)*	6.7	7.5
Unemployment Rate - Canada *(percent)*	7.1	7.3
INTEREST RATES (percent)	Oct 26/2011	Oct 27/2010
Prime Business Rate	3.00	3.00
Conventional Mortgages - 1 year	3.50	3.20
- 5 year	5.29	5.29
US-CANADA EXCHANGE RATE	Oct 26/2011	Oct 27/2010
(avg. noon spot rate) Cdn $ per US $	1.0101	1.0320
(closing rate) US $ per Cdn $	0.9952	0.9721
AVERAGE WEEKLY WAGE RATE		
(industrial aggregate - dollars)	Sep 2011	% change on one year ago
BC	843.67	1.2
Canada	845.51	2.0

SOURCES:

Population, Gross Domestic Product, Trade, Prices, Labour Force, Wage Rate } Statistics Canada

Interest Rates, Exchange Rates: Bank of Canada Weekly Financial Statistics

For latest Weekly Financial Statistics see www.bankofcanada.ca

Regional Employment Projections

Updated projections of employment by industry and occupation are now available. The data offers regional detail for College Regions and Development Regions with estimates for 2010 and projections for 2015.

http://www.bcstats.gov.bc.ca/data/lss/repm.asp

Small Business Profile, 2011

The 2011 Edition of the annual profile of small business in British Columbia is now available. The report provides information on British Columbia's small businesses, including number of businesses, employment and small business' contribution to the provincial economy.

http://www.bcstats.gov.bc.ca/data/bus_stat/busind/sm_bus/SBP2011.pdf

High Technology Reports

The 2010 editions of BC Stats' high technology reports are now available. The *Profile of the British Columbia High Technology Sector* measures the growth and performance of B.C.'s high technology sector. The key indicators examined include GDP, revenue, employment, wages and salaries, business counts and international trade. The *Input Indicators of the British Columbia High Technology Sector* report highlights conditions that affect B.C.'s high technology sector from a supply-side perspective. The indicators cover key aspects of the educational, business, government, external and labour sectors. For both these reports, the detailed tables are also available in Excel format.

http://www.bcstats.gov.bc.ca/data/bus_stat/busind/hi_tech.asp

Released this week by BC Stats

- No subscription releases

Next week

- Business Indicators, October 2011
- Labour Force Statistics, October 2011
- Earnings & Employment Trends, October 2011

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